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FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6313
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RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 1557
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 1376
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RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1230

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 001057

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/EX AND WHA/CAR
S/CRS
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA (BEN-YEHUDA)
WHA/EX PLEASE PASS USOAS
DS/IP/WHA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [KCRM](#) [MOPS](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: FIGHTING GANGS: TWO STEPS FORWARD, ONE STEP BACK

REF: A. PORT AU PRINCE 505
[1](#)B. PORT AU PRINCE 523
[1](#)C. PORT AU PRINCE 966
[1](#)D. PORT AU PRINCE 987

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[1](#)1. (U) This message is sensitive but unclassified -- please protect accordingly.

[1](#)2. (U) Summary: Since the beginning of 2007, MINUSTAH and the Haitian National Police (HNP) have arrested 750 gang members. The greatest effects are seen in Cite Soleil, where new gang members periodically rise to the top only to be arrested or chased out by another contender. In a recent setback, the incarceration system released "Ti Bazil," one of the first prominent gang members to be arrested, on May 21. In Gonaives, where unrest has been the word of the day, the HNP have made several arrests, including that of infamous gang leader "Ti Will." Despite these successes, neither kidnappings nor murders have been eliminated. End summary.

Cite Soleil Gangs Vie for Leadership

[1](#)3. (SBU) MINUSTAH continues to hammer away at top gang leaders in Cite Soleil. On May 7, they arrested "Blade Nazon," who led the gang based in the Ti Ayiti section of Cite Soleil and was reportedly attempting to expand his grip over the area (ref B). The HNP then arrested Wilo Jeune, younger brother of Evans Jeune (ref A) at the bus station in Gonaives on May 28. MINUSTAH continues to pursue Evans' other brother, Claude, who is reportedly still in Cite Soleil. International Organization for Migration (IOM) sources report that gang members are now feeding MINUSTAH information concerning the whereabouts of other gangs and their weapons caches in an attempt to push their rivals from power. The turf wars affect development work in the area as the gang members try to raise money by demanding ''taxes'' from NGOs.

Ti Bazil Released

¶4. (SBU) Pierre Louis Johnny, alias Ti Bazil, arrested February 18 on charges of kidnapping, illegal possession of a firearm, and gang involvement, walked out of jail a free man on May 21. Ti Bazil was one of the first major gang leaders arrested in MINUSTAH's push to quell gang violence in Cite Soleil. Police commissar Joseph Louis Mannes, assigned to the state attorney's office in Port-au-Prince, signed the release order, but justification for the release has not been made available. UN SRSG Edmond Mulet has made claims that Ti Bazil bribed a judge approximately USD 2000 for his release. MINUSTAH officials told PolCouns that while in custody Ti Bazil had been giving the HNP information about at-large Cite Soleil gang leader Amaral Duclona, and that now Amaral may be looking for revenge. Upon his release, Ti Bazil reportedly returned to his home in Soleil 11, where residents reported an increase in gunfire the night of his release. The latest rumor is that after fighting with a rival gang in Soleil 17 -- where Amaral is rumored to be hiding -- Ti Bazil fled Cite Soleil and took up hiding in Petionville.

Progress in Gonaives

¶5. (U) MINUSTAH and the HNP on May 27 arrested Gonaives gang leader Wilfort Ferdinand, alias Ti Will, as he gave an interview on a local radio station. The arrest marks the first strike against rampant gang violence in Gonaives (ref C). Another prominent gang member was killed and three more were arrested in a shootout with the HNP on June 1 in Gonaives.

New Wave of Murders and Kidnappings

¶6. (U) Member's of the ''Ti Machete'' gang based in the Martissant neighborhood of Port-au-Prince during the first

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week in May killed two HNP officers in what police believe were targeted revenge killings for HNP anti-gang activities in the neighborhood. Kidnappers on May 16 released Nicole Chancy, who claimed that the kidnappers revealed that Gary Pierre-Paul Charles, the Director of Information for Signal FM, was their real target. Charles has been receiving threats due to is strong denouncing of banditry and gangs on his program ''Haiti Today.'' The murder of Francois Ltour, one of Haiti's leading actors and media personalities, in an apparent botched kidnapping on May 9 capped the media coverage of the high profile crime in Port-au-Prince and Gonaives over the past several weeks.

GOH Still Talking Tough

¶7. (U) Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis declared on May 28 that he has given MINUSTAH and the HNP firm instructions to search out gang members. In keeping with previous GOH statements, he said that ''The government does not intend to give free rein to bandits and, on the contrary, we continue to pursue them.''

¶8. (SBU) Comment: The release of Ti Bazil exemplifies the corruption in the Haitian justice system but may have, ironically, strengthened the case for swift action on justice reform legislation currently before the parliament (ref D). Regardless, MINUSTAH has made great strides in improving the overall security of Cite Soleil. Jockeying for leadership of the gangs continues to foment unrest in the area, but the violence is greatly reduced from 2006 levels. The problem has morphed from large, organized gang networks to smaller, more widely dispersed criminal groups, similar to the problem the HNP and MINUSTAH face in other parts of Haiti. The diffuse yet persistent nature of gang activity from Cite Soleil to Martissant to Gonaives presents an ongoing challenge to MINUSTAH and the HNP. They can no longer be content with targeting a small number of marquee gang

leaders, but must tackle the wider challenges of basic law enforcement.
SANDERSON